

San José State University
Department of Art and Art History
PHOT 197.02, Senior Photography Project, Fall 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Binh Danh
Office Location:	On Zoom
Email:	binh.danh@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesday and Thursday: 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday and Thursday: 3 PM to 5:50 PM
Classroom:	On Zoom

Course Description

An undergraduate exit class in creating professional artist portfolios, developing methods of approaching galleries or the commercial side of photography, refining a professional web presence and other relevant forms of career development.

Furthermore, we will explore how contemporary artists engage with photographic materials and methods in pursuit of their ideas. This course introduces students to both established and emerging artists working in photography in recent years up to the present day through lectures, screenings, student presentations, readings, and writing assignments. We will use the internet as a constantly refreshing resource, accessing blogs and online curatorial spaces on issues related to contemporary photography. We will hear from current graduate students about their creative practices and decision that led them to a life of creative pursuits.

Course Format

Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses (mostly synchronous Learning)

See: [Learn Anywhere](#)

We will meet over Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Scheduled Thursdays are reserved for individual meetings on Zoom and on-campus in DH photo facility usage so students can work on their projects and assignments and get in-person studio help from me. Students are not required to use the DH photo facility, but can so to develop their portfolios. All students must wear face masks that completely cover the nose and mouth. They must maintain at least 6-foot distances from other students and the instructor at all times. They must refrain from coming to campus if they feel sick or have a fever. You must make an appointment to use the lab during class time.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, readings, slide presentations, grades, etc. can be found on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>

Your login is your student ID#. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU at <http://my.sjsu.edu> to learn of any updates.

For help with using Canvas see Canvas Student Resources page http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources

Course Goals

- Students will gain awareness of the photography as a means to fine arts and other creative fields.
- Students will be able to analyze and critique photographic images as a way to inform their creative practice.
- Students will develop their visual perception and learn how to use the photographic medium as a form of creative expression.
- Students will explore how photography operates in their chosen fields of fine art or commercial realms, explore entrepreneur possibilities in the creative fields, and set goals and decisions for continuing success with a BFA degree.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1 - Gain an understanding and utilize photographic related vocabulary.

CLO2 - Create a semester final project that demonstrates a high level of technical and conceptual mastery of photographic medium.

CLO3 - Utilize and apply professional practices for photographers and art professionals that will allow the student to have a successful art/photography career in the future.

CLO4 - Develop written and oral communication skills that will allow the students to effectively communicate what their work is about and how it relates to the contemporary art discourse and/or commercial art applications.

CLO5 - Present their photography work in a professional manner through the creation of a portfolio website, self-published hard copy photo book and other promotional materials.

CLO6 - Speak and write about their work in an effective way that communicates their ideas and is industry appropriate.

CLO7 - Begin a successful photography career in the fine art or commercial world that is sustainable and financially viable.

CLO8 - Develop a studio practice that feeds their creativity and allows them to continue to grow as artists.

CLO9 - Prep for the next stepping-stones in the photographic field

CLO10 - Gain an understanding of what Photography is, where it has come from, and where it is going

Required Texts/Readings

[Art/Work: Everything You Need to Know \(and Do\) As You Pursue Your Art Career](#)

by Heather Darcy Bhandari and Jonathan Melber (*see Canvas*)

Other Readings and suggested books:

[Living and Sustaining a Creative Life: Essays by 40 Working Artists](#)

by Sharon Louden

[How to Survive and Prosper as an Artist: Selling Yourself Without Selling Your Soul](#)

by Caroll Michels

[Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear](#)

by Elizabeth Gilbert

[Studio Life: Rituals, Collections, Tools, and Observations on the Artistic Process](#)

by Sarah Trigg

[Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative](#)

[Show Your Work!](#)

by Austin Kleon

[Art & Fear: Observations On the Perils \(and Rewards\) of Artmaking](#)

By David Bayles and Ted Orland

Online readings available in Canvas course website

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

- DSLR/mirrorless/film camera and lens(s)
- Laptop Computer
- USB Stick and External Hard Drive for backup (you will be taking A LOT of images)
- Tripod (strongly recommended, but can be borrowed from check out window) - Portfolio case/box/folder for storing and transporting images
- Presentation materials like art supplies, matting, framing etc. (perhaps optional)

Adobe Software Programs - Creative Cloud from this website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/adobe/students/index.html>

SJSU is providing all students, faculty, staff and administrators with free Adobe software for campus and home computers, and you must have an active SJSU One ID and password to qualify for ordering and downloading this software.

Library Liaison

Gareth Scott

email: gareth.scott@sjsu.edu

phone: [\(408\) 808-2094](tel:(408)808-2094)

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
4th Floor Administration Offices

Department Advising

For information about majors and minors in Art & Art History, for a change of major/minor forms and a list of advisors: <http://www.sjsu.edu/art/> or the Art & Art History department office in ART 116, [408-924-4320](tel:408-924-4320), art@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Attendance

This course is lecture/technique-intensive, and attendance is required at all lecture and critique sessions. Do not schedule appointments, work, or any other commitment during this class, as they will not be excused.

Critiques and Assignments

The class curriculum will focus on:

- 1) Learning about professional development and the tribulation of being a professional artist

Subject matters could range from the art market, gallery representation, and how to find employment. How do we make ends meet as an artist? Other topics such as goals, fear, maintaining a studio practice out of art school, and the challenges and rewards of being a working artist in the 21st-century.

- 2) Developing your artistic portfolio via critiques

As one of the essential elements in the study of art, critiques will play a vital role in this course. We will have weekly critiques and attendance at critiques is mandatory. You are required to show up for critiques prepared with your finished work. Your assignment will be graded following the critique, and late assignments will only be accepted under unusual, extenuating, or emergency circumstances. Additionally, you must be prepared to engage in discussion about your work as well as the work of your classmates in a manner that is educational, analytical, and objective. Participating in critique discussion is as essential as showing up for the critique, and your level of participation will be considered in your final grade.

Make the most of your critiques. It may not always feel like it, but this process is a privilege. Treat this opportunity as you would a studio visit from a well-known curator or gallerist. Ensure you're as well

prepared as possible, especially for your final critique, with work in a near finish state. The first critique should be used for work in progress. What I mean by “work in progress” may not be resolved in terms of presentation, or maybe missing potential additional elements. Sketches, notes, or spoken descriptions of your work are complicated to build a productive critique around and should only be considered as supplemental materials. Even your “work in progress” should be presented in as complete a form as possible. You will encounter time and space limits in your professional lives. Use this class as practice. Please make every effort to give your work a thorough discussion, attention, and respect it deserves.

15 Weekly Canvas Assignments – See schedule for each class session **75%**

- Canvas Assignment #1: Helsinki Bus Theory
- Canvas Assignment #2: CV and Resume
- Canvas Assignment #3: Writing Artist Statement and Art Bio
- Canvas Assignment #4: Showing your work: in-print and online
- Canvas Assignment #5: Writing a Project Proposal
- Canvas Assignment #6: Fear and Art
- Canvas Assignment #7: Giving an Art Talk
- Canvas Assignment #8: Graduate School
- Canvas Assignment #9: Lecture by Carrie Mae Weems
- Canvas Assignment #10: Finding a Photo/Art related job or starting one yourself
- Canvas Assignment #11: Other Funding
- Canvas Assignment #12: Selling your work or service
- Canvas Assignment #13: Lecture by Catherine Opie
- Canvas Assignment #14: The Art Market
- Canvas Assignment #15: Working as an Artist

Semester project (portfolio) **15%**

Participation (Critiques, class activities, Final Exam) **10%**

TOTAL **100%**

Participation:

Please keep in mind that for classes such as this one, active participation is essential. You are expected to attend all class meetings, including those you are not presenting or having work critiqued, and you are expected to actively participate in discussions about the work of your peers, readings, lectures, etc. Taking chances will be highly rewarded! Your good energy is always evident, even if some of your projects don't reach the level of success you initially imagined. I would much prefer to reward you for "failing" at a higher level, than succeeding at your current level of comfort.

Final Examination

Our Final Exam is scheduled to take place on Friday, December 11 @ 2:45 PM to 5 PM.

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

Grading Information

The criteria to earn an excellent grade:

- Technical proficiency in subject matter with the camera, darkroom, and image presentation • A thorough understanding and creative interpretation of all assignments
- Often going beyond the minimum shooting requirements for each assignment
- Exhibiting thorough verbal engagement in critiques and class discussions.
- Punctual daily attendance
- A comprehensive and neatly organized Photography Notebook
- Respect for the photo area, cleaning up after yourself, and helping your peers do the same
- Evidence that you have challenged yourself above and beyond the status quo

Numeric grade equivalents:

100% and over A+

93% - 99% A

92% - 90% A-

89% - 88% B+

87% - 83% B

82% - 80% B-

79% - 78% C+

77% - 73% C

72% - 70% C-

69% - 68% D+

67% - 63% D

62% - 60% D-

Below 60% F

Please Note:

Except in cases of documented emergencies, incomplete grades are not given in this course.

“All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See University Policy F13-1 at "<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf>" for more details.

Classroom Protocol

Students are expected to be punctual for class and actively engaged during all class meetings. Cell phones, smart phones, or other devices that detract from full attention should turn off or silenced. Constantly checking your phone during lectures, demos, and critiques will lower your participation grades.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>), which is hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Education. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Additional Note:

	Thurs. Sept 24	3:00 – 5:50 Student presentation: 11 Artist Talks
7	Tues. Sept 29	3:00 – 3:50 Lecture 4:00 – 4:50 Canvas Assignment #10: Finding a Photo/Art related job or starting one yourself 5:00 – 5:50 Critique (5:00-5:20): Critique (5:20-5:40):
	Thurs. Oct 1	Campus studio day by appointment
8	Tues. Oct 6	3:00 – 3:50 Lecture 4:00 – 4:50 Canvas Assignment #11: Other Funding 5:00 – 5:50 Critique (5:00-5:20): Critique (5:20-5:40):
	Thurs. Oct 8	Campus studio day by appointment
9	Tues. Oct 13	3:00 – 3:50 Lecture 4:00 – 4:50 Canvas Assignment #12: Selling your work or service 5:00 – 5:50 Critique (5:00-5:20): Critique (5:20-5:40):
	Thurs. Oct 15	Campus studio day by appointment
10	Tues. Oct 20	3:00 – 3:50 Lecture 4:00 – 4:50 Canvas Assignment #13: Lecture by Catherine Opie 5:00 – 5:50

	Thurs. Nov 19	<p>Critique (5:00-5:20): Critique (5:20-5:40):</p> <p>Campus studio day by appointment</p>
15	<p>Tues. Nov 24</p> <p>Tues. Nov 26 Thanksgiving</p>	<p>3:00 – 3:50 Lecture</p> <p>4:00 – 5:50 Critique (4:00-4:20): Critique (4:20-4:40): Critique (4:40-5:00): Critique (5:00-5:20): Critique (5:20-5:40):</p>
16	<p>Tues. Dec 1</p> <p>Thurs. Dec 3</p>	<p>3:00 – 3:50 Lecture</p> <p>3:00 – 5:50 Online Gallery Assignment and website</p> <p>Campus studio day by appointment</p>
Final Exam	Fri., Dec 11 @ 2:45 PM to 5 PM	Final Critique